



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

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### Census data helps build your community

As one of the most important events in the Australian Bureau of Statistics calendar, Census night, draws closer, the South Australian Census team is bringing a message to the Riverland.

Helen Sparrow, South Australian Census Manager, along with local District Manager, Peter Wohlers, local Area Supervisors and local Collectors are holding a Census Community BBQ to let local residents know about the importance of filling out their Census form.

Helen Sparrow, South Australian Census Manager, said:

“Two week’s from today, on Tuesday 8 August 2006, more than 20.5 million people across Australia will be counted in the National Census. In South Australia, Census Collectors will hit the streets this week (28 July) delivering forms to more than 670,000 households across the state.

“While most people are aware that they need to fill in a Census form on Census night, many may not be aware of the ways in which Census data is used to benefit their local community.

“The Census gives us a snapshot of what is happening in local communities around the country once every five years. This information is invaluable in helping us to understand our communities and the characteristics within particular areas.”

Lynley Jones, Country Health SA’s Regional Planner for the Riverland, urges everyone in the local community to fill out their Census form:

“The Census provides the opportunity for everyone in the Riverland the chance to stand up and be counted. All seven Country Health SA Regional Directors use Census data on a regular basis to assist with health planning in the regional areas. Census data provides Country Health SA, as well as community organisations and businesses in the community, with accurate and detailed data so that we are able to provide the services that you, our residents, need.

“Census data is used in much of our strategic planning and community development work. This important data gives us information about the make-up of our community, such as, how many people are living in our local area, the range of ages in our community and whether people need assistance in their day to day lives. Through this information we are able to build a better future for our local area by directing services and facilities and developing programs where they are needed.”

Over the last few years in the local area, Country Health SA has used Census data in the following ways:

- To compile health assessments, annual reports and health profiles. All these documents assist in improving health services and facilities for the local community and to determine needs of potential clients.
- To determine child care projections to substantiate childcare expansion.
- To determine the number of age care places needed
- To use in understanding the aging population in the NESB communities and therefore focus special services
- To inform service providers of the quality and accessibility of existing services and to provide evidence when proposing they look at current services and respond to current needs

Ms Jones said that she and colleagues use Census data as a tool of the trade. She uses it everyday to establish key characteristics of the Riverland such as how many young people are still at home, for small area data, projections of gender groups, language spoken at home, and service planning. She is currently using Census data to conduct a Riverland Social Economic Study.

Census Collectors will begin delivering Census forms from 28 July. They will return to your household to collect forms from 9 August to 28 August.

It is important that everyone is counted in the Census. By completing a Census form on 8 August, you can help plan for a better Australia, and a better community.

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